



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

## **DIVISION OF LICENSING PROGRAMS**

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**Assisted Living Facility Lunch and Learn  
February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021  
12:00 p.m.–1:00 p.m.**

# Panelists

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## VDSS Division of Licensing Programs

- Tara Ragland, Division Director, Sr.
- Eddie Richardson, Field Operations Associate Director, Sr.
- Jamie Sipe, Field Operations Associate Director, Sr.

## Virginia Department of Health COVID-19 Testing Team

- Dr. Brooke Rossheim, MD, MPH, Public Health Physician Specialist

**Moderator** – Leighann Smigielski, VDSS DOLP Operations Manager

# Agenda

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**12:00 – 12:10: Introductions/Opening Remarks**

*Leighann Smigielski & Tara Ragland*

**12:10 – 12:30: Best Practices and Effective Communication with Families and Responsible Parties**

*Eddie Richardson & Jamie Sipe*

**12:30 – 12:50: VDH Long-term Care Facility Survey Results & Updates**

*Dr. Brooke Rossheim, MD, MPH*

**12:50 – 1:00: Questions**

# Assisted Living Facility Tips & Best Practices for Visitation

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- Visitor Safety and Contact
- Core Principles
  - Screening
  - Hand Hygiene
  - Face Coverings
  - Social Distancing
  - Signage
  - Cleaning and Disinfection
- Visitation
  - Indoor
  - Outdoor

# Barriers to Effective Communication with Families and Responsible Parties

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The pandemic is profoundly affecting life around the world, and isolation and contact restrictions can present many challenges. If your community is struggling with finding ways to communicate with family members, you are not alone. Common obstacles to effective communication right now can include:

- Limited or restricted visits, which means less face-to-face communication
- Email or electronic messages sometimes end up in a Spam folder
- Family members are overwhelmed with communications from their employers, schools, grocery stores, etc.

# Barriers to Effective Communication with Families and Responsible Parties

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- Information overload can lead to more stress.
- Residents with cognitive loss are not good reporters and phone/video calls can be confusing or overstimulating.
- Family members have many questions and can be upset without an immediate response.

Fortunately, you and your community can use your creativity to create meaningful ways to communicate with family members during the pandemic.

# Ideas for Improving Communication with Families and Responsible Parties

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Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- Send out postcards to family members from your team or from residents that include community photos on the front. Make it a monthly tradition!
- Send photos of loved ones to family members via text or email a few times per month, with a quick note from you and the team.
- Have residents write a quick “miss you” note on a dry erase board and take their photo with it. Then, send it to their family members.
- Use 1:1 time to help residents write a note to their loved ones to stick in the mail.
- Send out your community newsletter electronically, as well as posting the link to your community’s social media feed.

# Ideas for Improving Communication with Families and Responsible Parties

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Ideas (cont.):

- Create videos to include in your electronic newsletter or social media feed talking about what your department is doing each week to keep residents feeling connected and happy; when you tell loved ones what you are specifically doing to address a concern, you are growing their confidence.
- Host conference calls for family members and residents that are social in nature, taking place of a more traditional Family Night; have a reminiscing phone call, trivia time call, or even a themed event.
- Create a “frequently asked questions” page on your community website with answers to common COVID-19 communication questions; you can also answer a few common questions on your department’s voicemail.



# Ideas for Improving Communication with Families and Responsible Parties

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Ideas (cont.):

- Create a family group on your community's social media feed where you can post fun photos of residents involved in fun, socially distant activities.
- Use Zoom or other video conference calling technology to keep up with resident care related family meetings and assist residents as needed.
- Ask a local entertainer to host a performance via Facebook Live or Zoom so family members can virtually attend with their loved one.
- Use Virtual Reality (VR) goggles to allow residents to “visit” different places or take part in calls with family.

# VDSS Website

[www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov)

The screenshot shows the VDSS website homepage. At the top, there is an orange banner with "VDSS BULLETINS AND CLOSURES" and a dark blue banner with "VDSS COVID-19 Resources" and "DSS Closures". Below these is a navigation bar with the VDSS logo and menu items: ASSISTANCE, FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION, CHILD CARE, COMMUNITY SUPPORT, CHILD SUPPORT, ABUSE & NEGLECT, and CAREERS. The main content area features a large image of children jumping in a park, with icons and labels for CHILDREN, FAMILIES, ADULTS, NEED HELP?, APPLY ONLINE, and LOCAL DSS. A blue banner below the image contains a COVID-19 message. The footer includes a "Welcome" section, a description of VDSS services, a photo of Commissioner S. Duke Storen, and a circular graphic showing statistics: 1 MILLION CITIZENS SERVED, \$1 MILLION CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTED, and \$1 MILLION DISBURSED IN ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS.

**VDSS BULLETINS AND CLOSURES**

**VDSS COVID-19 Resources** | **DSS Closures**

**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

ASSISTANCE | FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION | CHILD CARE | COMMUNITY SUPPORT | CHILD SUPPORT | ABUSE & NEGLECT | CAREERS

**CHILDREN** **FAMILIES** **ADULTS** **NEED HELP?** **APPLY ONLINE** **LOCAL DSS**

The Virginia Department of Social Services, in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Health, are committed to the fight against COVID-19. Have you downloaded **COVIDWISE**, Virginia's COVID-19 exposure notification app? Add your phone to the fight [here](#). For up-to-date information, assistance, and resources from across state government, click [here](#).

**Welcome** to the Virginia Department of Social Services

VDSS is one of the largest Commonwealth agencies, partnering with 120 local departments of social services, along with faith-based and non-profit organizations, to promote the well-being of children and families statewide. We proudly serve alongside 1,650 (state) and 8,500 (local) human services professionals throughout the Social Services System, who ensure that thousands of Virginia's most vulnerable citizens have access to the best services and benefits available to them.

Together, we work each day to serve, empower, and create opportunities for brighter futures.

**S. Duke Storen**  
Commissioner

**1 MILLION**  
CITIZENS SERVED

**\$1 MILLION**  
CHILD SUPPORT COLLECTED

**\$1 MILLION**  
DISBURSED IN ADOPTION ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS

# Where to Find Resources and Tools

The screenshot displays the VDSS website interface. At the top, an orange banner contains the text "VDSS BULLETINS AND CLOSURES" and "VDSS COVID-19 Resources | DSS Closures". Below this is a dark blue header with the "VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES" logo and navigation links: "ASSISTANCE", "FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION", "CHILD CARE", "COMMUNITY SUPPORT", "CHILD SUPPORT", "ABUSE & NEGLECT", and "CAREERS". The main content area is titled "Assisted Living Facilities (ALF)" and includes a "SHARE" button with social media icons. The text describes ALFs as non-medical residential settings and provides information about nursing homes. A sidebar on the right contains "Announcements" (PPE Distribution and Information (PDF)) and "Related Links" (About Adult Day Care Centers, Auxiliary Grants, Online Complaint Form, Search for an Assisted Living Facility).

VDSS BULLETINS AND CLOSURES

VDSS COVID-19 Resources | DSS Closures

Select Language

Virginia.gov

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

HOME ABOUT CONTACT

ASSISTANCE FOSTER CARE & ADOPTION CHILD CARE COMMUNITY SUPPORT CHILD SUPPORT ABUSE & NEGLECT CAREERS

### Assisted Living Facilities (ALF)

SHARE

Assisted living facilities (ALFs) are non-medical residential settings that provide or coordinate personal and health care services, 24-hour supervision, and assistance for the care of four or more adults who are aged, infirm or disabled. This care may be provided in one or more locations. Non-residential adult facilities are listed under [Adult Day Care](#).

Assisted living facilities are **not** nursing homes. A nursing home is a facility in which the primary function is the provision, on a continuing basis, of nursing services and health-related services for the treatment and inpatient care of two or more non-related individuals. Nursing homes are regulated by the Virginia Department of Health (VDH). To find a nursing home, visit the [VDH website](#).

Contract All | Expand All

- Regulations & Code References
- New ALF Applicants
- Current ALF Providers (includes forms)

Announcements

PPE Distribution and Information (PDF)

Related Links

- About Adult Day Care Centers
- Auxiliary Grants
- Online Complaint Form
- Search for an Assisted Living Facility

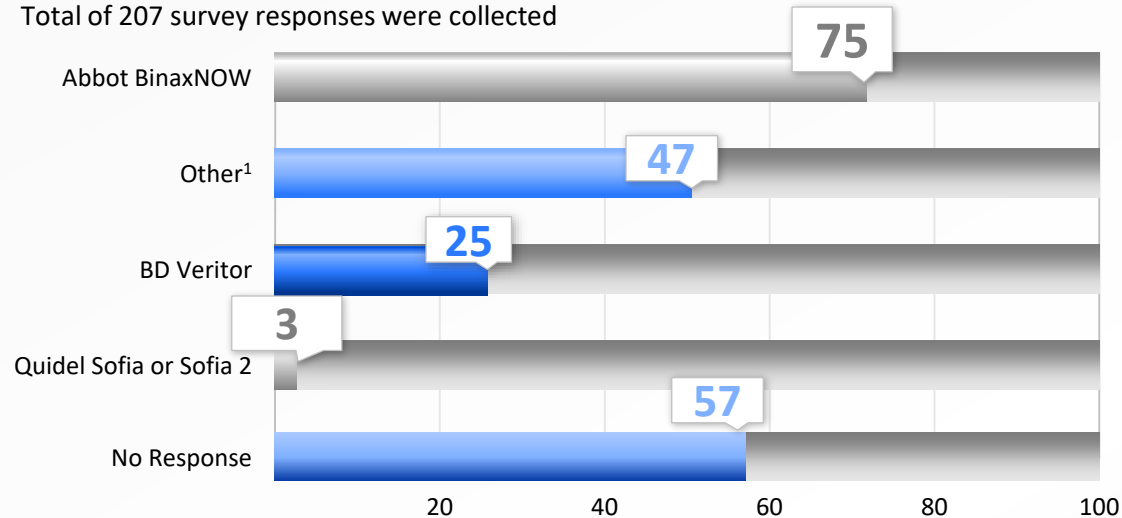
The VDSS website provides resources, information, and communication to Assisted Living Facilities (ALFs).

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# Virginia Department of Health: Long-Term Care Facility Survey Results

## Antigen Platforms Utilized

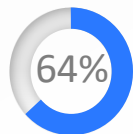
Total of 207 survey responses were collected



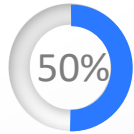
84 %

Percent of facilities that expect to utilize all their rapid antigen testing supplies

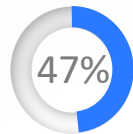
## Responses to survey questions



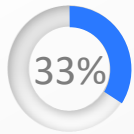
Percent of facilities who test staff and residents with PCR



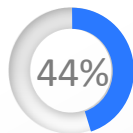
Percent of facilities that use PCR to confirm antigen tests



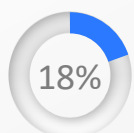
Percent of facilities that have enough tests for the next month



Percent of facilities that would like an in-service rapid antigen test



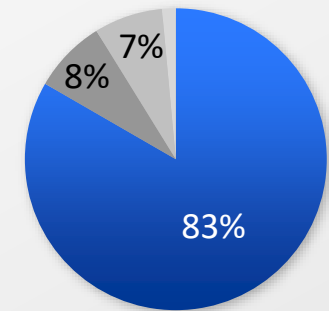
Percent of facilities testing staff and residents using in-house COVID-19 rapid antigen testing



Percent of facilities that require technical assistance in performing antigen testing

## Facility Type

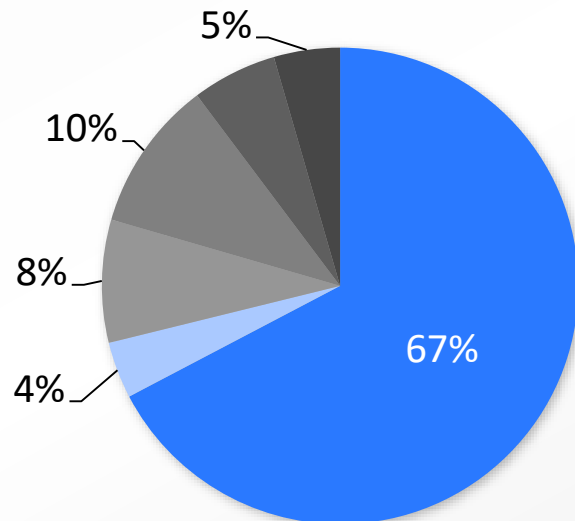
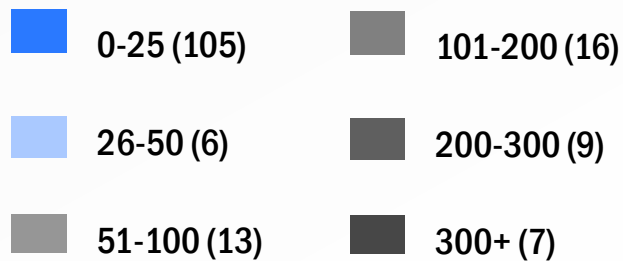
- Assisted Living (170)
- Nursing Home/SNF (16)
- Other<sup>2</sup> (15)
- No Response (3)



<sup>1</sup>Other tests, include: Biolab Science, Respira-ID, Healgen and Copan. This also includes results when a responder is unsure or using multiple platforms.

<sup>2</sup> Other Facility Type include: CCRC, Memory Care, Adult Day center, VAMC, and multipurpose facilities

## Number of Antigen Tests Done at a Facility Each Week<sup>1</sup>



# 38 %

Percent of responders indicated they need additional resources

### Common Responses:

- 1) Rapid antigen testing kits
- 2) Additional personnel support
- 3) Supplies and equipment of any type (i.e., testing, beds, alcohol wipes)

# 34 %

Percent of responders who provided contact information for future educational programs at their facility

# 20 %

Percent of responders who would like to see a COVID-19 related educational program

### Common Responses:

- 1) Vaccine Information on options, distribution, and administration
- 2) Training on the use of PPE equipment
- 3) Proper procedure for testing of residents and staff
- 4) General COVID-19 information

<sup>1</sup> The fifty-one (51) respondents who left this question blank were excluded from the graphic.

# Resource Links

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## VDSS Resources

- [Visitation in Assisted Living Facilities: Tips and Best Practices](#)
- [ALF Outbreak Toolkit](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccination Update and FAQ](#)

## VDH Resources

- [Virginia COVID-19 Long-Term Care Task Force](#)

## Questions About Today's Presentation?

VDSS: Contact your Licensing Inspector for additional information

VDH: Submit questions to [hai@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:hai@vdh.virginia.gov)



VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF  
SOCIAL SERVICES

***Mission:*** To design and deliver high quality human services that help Virginians achieve safety, independence, and overall well-being.

***Vision:*** A Commonwealth in which all Virginians have the resources and services they need to shape strong futures for themselves, their families and their communities.

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THANK YOU!